

## INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	Czechoslovakia	REPORT		25X1
SUBJECT	Censorship of Mail	DATE DISTR.	12 July 1955	
		NO. OF PAGES	2	
DATE OF INFO.		REQUIREMENT NO.	RD	25X1
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES		
DATE ACQUIRED		This is UNEVALUATED Information		

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1. Mail from abroad is currently censored according to various procedures. The greatest attention of the censors is paid to letters arriving from people who escaped to the West after 1948. All mail from the West sent by such people is first sent to the so-called Zonal Controls (pasmova kontrola) which are located in Karlovy Vary, As, Pilsen, Ceske Budejovice, and Mikulov. These are, in effect, the first interception points for mail arriving from any western place. Letters are sorted in these control centers and forwarded to the headquarters in Prague, which is called the Foreign Section (oddeleni zahranici).
2. Here the StB maintains an index file listing refugees and the degree of interest it has in them. Letters from persons who are not particularly interesting are then sorted again and sent on to the regional offices of the Post Office, where the StB can submit them to censorship according to its local needs. The Foreign Section in Prague then performs various types of censorship, according to the degree of its interest.
3. The first type is the so-called Open Censorship (censura otevrena). The letter is read, and if necessary, photographed, and the photograph filed with the material concerning the refugee who wrote it. If it contains anything objectionable, that part is deleted with black ink. The envelope is then sealed with a black piece of tape and a stamped "censored".
4. The next type is one of secret censorship, called "provocational" (provokacni). It is used in the case of letters to addressees inside Czechoslovakia whom the StB want to "get" (nabourati). The letter is opened in a manner which the recipient will not notice. Its content is photographed, and then some subversive leaflet from the West (of which the StB has an ample supply) or an anti-Communist cutting from some emigre publication abroad is placed inside the envelope. The letter is then carefully sealed and forwarded to the original addressee. The StB now waits a few days to see whether the addressee will report the arrival of the treasonous material to the police. If not, he is hauled in (provede se zatah). UNCODED as what the StB were aiming at in the first place.
5. Another type of operation performed at this Foreign Section in Prague is the stopping of mail (stopeni posty). This is a more subtle procedure, applied in cases where the police have some specific objectives in mind. Letters

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arriving from abroad are simply filed away and not delivered at all. The StB now waits for a reaction from either side, as failure to receive expected mail may result in action by the recipient. It will also show them how close the relationship is between writer and addressee, whether the addressee expects the letters, etc. From the reaction of the writer abroad the StB can also draw conclusions as to how far they may be able to coerce the writer by threats to the addressee. At certain intervals the StB will let a letter go through, in order to get an idea of the reactions of those involved.

6. Lastly, there is the random (namatkovy) type of censorship. This is employed where the correspondent has lived abroad for a number of years, has regularly corresponded with someone in Czechoslovakia, and his letters have been innocuous. In such cases a letter will be checked only once in every three or four months and its contents photographed. Otherwise the letters pass uncensored. The same procedure applies to letters from refugees who have been abroad for more than one year and in whose previous letters the censorship has shown nothing objectionable. The file card of such people is marked "Random" (Namatkove) and letters usually pass without interference. As soon as the random censorship shows up anything suspicious, that person's correspondence is immediately reclassified for another type of censorship. The above procedures apply to all incoming mail, regardless of the Western country of origin. Censorship of outgoing mail is, generally speaking, identical with the above, except that "provocational" censorship does not exist here.
7. There is censorship of internal communications in Czechoslovakia, but this is done by the regional administrations (krajske spravy) of the StB. It is used against persons suspected of being enemies of the regime and who figure on special lists of the StB. For this type of censorship an official of the StB periodically visits post offices and picks out any letters he happens to be interested in from the sorting shelves. Such letters either "get lost", or else are secretly opened, photographed, and mailed on. This sort of censorship is of a more random nature, but seems to serve the purposes of the StB very adequately.

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